

Idaho Currents

COEUR D'ALENE INDIAN TRIBE CONSIDERS WIND DEVELOPMENT ON PLUMMER BUTTE

"The Answer is Blowin' in the Wind," by Peter, Paul and Mary; Bette Midler's "Wind Beneath My Wings," and "They Call the Wind Mariah," by the Kingston Trio – sound familiar?

For centuries composers have been writing music and singing about the wind. Now, members of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe in North Idaho want to find out if there's enough wind on their reservation to provide a new source of economic development for their tribe.

Very general wind power resource data prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2002 suggests there may be several areas of the 345,000-acre reservation where wind resources could be suitable for wind power development. However, on-site evaluation coupled with scientific data collection is needed before they will know for sure.

That's why state and federal representatives and tribal leaders traveled to Plummer Butte and Mary Minerva McCroskey Memorial State Park with hand-held anemometers the last week in October and experienced some "extremely cold 20-mile-an-hour winds that could almost take your breath away," says Gerald Fleischman, energy specialist with the Energy Division.

The park is 15 miles south of Plummer Butte and on the south end of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation.

Energy specialists spent several days with tribal officials pouring over maps and wind assessment data to identify potential wind power development sites on the reservation. Then the group visited the most promising sites to select a location to install the anemometers, special wind measuring devices.

Energy Division officials hope to install up to three anemometers on the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation early next spring. The measuring devices, located on towers 66 feet high, will record wind data for a year or more. The data can then be used to evaluate the potential for wind power project development at those sites.



While standing on top of the 4,145-foot-high Plummer Butte, Gerald Fleischman (far right), staff engineer with the Energy Division, points toward Moses Mountain with three other wind energy specialists. (Photo by Dick Larsen)

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Three members of the energy team, Kevin Smith, Energy Concepts (left); Paul Woodin with Western Wind Power, and Gerald Fleischman with the Energy Division, look at the power poles north of Plummer. (Photo by Dick Larsen)

"I've been interested in the potential of wind energy development on our reservation for some time," says Leta Campbell, Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council member.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe project is a continuation of the Idaho Tribal Wind Power program launched last spring by the Energy Division. The project is designed to help provide scientific data to Idaho tribes that they can use to determine if wind power development is appropriate on their reservations.

Did you know that ...

Anemometers that measure wind data remain in place for at least one year? The wind data is collected and analyzed for each site to help determine if it is feasible and cost effective to install a wind turbine or turbines at that site.

"We're delighted to be able to work with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe on this project," says Cheryl Wilson, who heads the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Wind Project for the Energy Division. "Wind is the fastest growing energy sector in the country and Idaho is fortunate to have some of the best wind resources in the northwest."

Wind power measurement projects are currently under way on Fort Hall and Duck Valley Idaho Indian reservations. Two anemometers are measuring wind on Shoshone-Paiute lands at Duck Valley and five anemometers are on Shoshone-Bannock lands at Fort Hall.

USDA Selects Two Idaho Wind Projects For Grants

Two Idaho wind projects were among approximately 100 around the nation selected for funding by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The projects selected were proposed by the Schwendiman Farm northeast of Idaho Falls and by LeRoy Jarolimek, who owns a farm west of Burley.

The Schwendiman project calls for the construction of a 1.5-megawatt wind farm with a 1.5-megawatt turbine. The grant is for \$500,000, with a total project cost of \$2 million. Utah Power and Light plans to purchase the Schwendiman's power. The project is estimated to provide enough energy to supply 250 homes.

Did you know that ...

Idaho ranks 13th in the nation for its potential development using wind as a power source? Although the wind may seem to always be blowing in a specific area, that doesn't necessarily mean they are suitable for development.

Jarolimek's project is a 20 kW turbine that will connect to the family's house to generate power and offset the family's use of power under Idaho Power's net-metering tariff. The grant is for \$10,000 and the total project cost is about \$35,000.

Jarolimek has collected wind data with an anemometer borrowed from the Idaho Anemometer Loan program through the Energy Division. The device helped him gather the information he needed to apply for the grant.

Schwendiman has been collecting wind data for three years, but had significant gaps in the data from various problems with the anemometers.

With the help of the INEEL (Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory), he was able to patch in the data for the application from a nearby anemometer operated by INEEL during the same time period.

Two Twin Falls Retailers Join Partnership Program

Y-R Homes and Magic Homes, Inc., both located near U.S. Hwy. 93 north of Twin Falls, are now official program participants in the Energy Division's Energy Star® home certification program.

The two Magic Valley area retailers join 30 other Idaho manufactured home retailers in the energy efficiency partnership program. The Energy Star Program is part of the Northwest Energy Efficient Manufactured (NEEM™) regional energy efficiency program.

"Homes built to the NEEM option are considered the most energy-efficient manufactured homes in the region," says Bob Minter, senior energy specialist with the Energy Division and NEEM program manager.

The homes constructed in Idaho's five manufacturing plants are certified by the Energy Division to meet the higher energy efficiency option. The Northwest's state energy offices certify an additional 15 plants in Oregon, Washington, California and British Columbia.

"Our customers rely on us to sell the best possible products in our homes," says Maxine Kulhanek, owner-manager of Magic Homes, Inc. "We believe that by offering the Energy Star upgrade, we are giving them the extra service our company has the reputation of providing. The additional savings on their utility bills will continue into the future and give them a positive outlook on their purchase of a Energy Star manufactured home," she adds.

NEEM's regional industry efficiency program assists manufacturers and retailers in the Pacific Northwest in building and promoting manufactured homes. Under the Idaho partnership program, retailers participate in an energy-efficient home construction and marketing briefing with the Energy Division.

The NEEM Program is a cooperative effort between utilities, state governments, manufacturers and efficiency industry representatives committed to bringing affordable, energy-efficient products and services to the marketplace.

Interested homebuyers can obtain information on the NEEM option by calling Y-R Homes, 208-324-0020, Magic Homes, Inc. 208-644-9641, or the regional program hotline, 1-888-355-6277, which is operated by the Energy Division.



Two volunteers from Washington Mutual in Idaho Falls finish framing a Low E window in Idaho's first Energy Star/Habitat for Humanity home. (*Habitat for Humanity photo*)

Volunteers Build New Energy Star/Habitat For Humanity Home

An Idaho Falls family will soon be the recipient of the first Energy Star®/Habitat for Humanity home in Idaho.

The home is a combined building effort with the Energy Division, Habitat for Humanity, the Energy Star Program, Idaho Falls Power, and the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

Energy Star is a government-backed program helping people save energy and protect the environment. All Energy Star qualified new homes are more comfortable, more durable, cost less to own, and are good for the environment.

The home's Energy Star features include:

- Increased insulation in the walls
- Better double-pane windows with Low E glass
- Compact fluorescent lights
- Increased sealants to prevent air leakage
- Advanced ventilation system that recovers heat to provide warm, fresh air throughout the house.

The home also includes an Energy Star labeled refrigerator.

The Habitat for Humanity-Idaho Falls Chapter began its mission of providing safe, interest-free affordable housing in 1994. This is the 14th home built in the Idaho Falls area.

Fast Facts About Energy Star, Habitat For Humanity



- Idaho's first Energy Star® qualified Habitat for Humanity home has increased insulation, better double pane windows and is carefully sealed to prevent drafts. The advanced ventilation system that will recover heat to provide warm, fresh air throughout the house.

- This home will be tested and certified by the Energy Division to ensure it meets ENERGY STAR guidelines.
- An Energy Star qualified home uses at least 30 percent less energy than a home built to Model Energy code standards.
- The Energy Star qualified lights will use up to 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and will last nine times longer.
- The Energy Star qualified refrigerator, also included in this home, will use up to 40 percent less energy than a standard refrigerator purchased in 2001.



The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) is a non-profit group of electric utilities, state governments, public interest groups and efficiency representatives. Under this partnership these entities support regional programs that make affordable, energy-efficient products and services available in the marketplace.

Poverty and housing in Idaho Falls:

- As many as 13 percent of Idaho Falls families pay 75 percent of their total income for rent.
- Over 20 percent of children in Bonneville County live in conditions of poverty.
- An astonishing number of local families make too much money to qualify for government housing assistance, but make too little to qualify for a conventional home loan.



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Habitat's Idaho Falls affiliate:

- Founded November 1994
- Thirteen homes built to date
- Non-profit, faith-based, housing ministry that invites people of all backgrounds, races and religions to build houses together in partnership with families in need.

Did you know that ...

Volunteers provide most of the labor, and individual and corporate donors provide money and materials to build Habitat houses. Partner families invest hundreds of hours of labor – “sweat equity” – into building their homes and the homes of others.

- **Partner family selection criteria** – need; financial eligibility; ability to repay mortgage loan; and willingness to partner with Habitat.
- **Sweat equity** – families required to devote between 300-400 hours of labor on their own homes and homes of others.
- **No profit, no interest loans** – A frequently misunderstood part of Habitat – these homes aren't “give-aways.” Families make a down payment and regular monthly mortgage payments, just as traditional borrowers do. The difference is that they pay no interest and the homes are less expensive because of volunteer labor.
- **Loan proceeds build more homes** – Monthly mortgage payments of families are reinvested in future Habitat homes.

Habitat for Humanity International:

- Third largest homebuilder in the United States
- Built more than 125,000 houses around the world to date
- Provides more than 3,000 communities with safe, decent, affordable housing.